

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

**THOMAS L., GLENNA L., and
KAYLA L.,**

Plaintiffs,

v.

**BOARD of EDUCATION of
EDWARDSVILLE COMMUNITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT #7,**

Defendant.

Civil No. **06-017-MJR**

ORDER

PROUD, Magistrate Judge:

This matter is before the Court for purposes of docket control.

Plaintiffs have filed suit using the initial “L” instead of their last name. This is problematic for two reasons. First, judicial proceedings are generally open to the public. “The use of fictitious names is disfavored, and the judge has an independent duty to determine whether exceptional circumstances justify such a departure from the normal method of proceeding in federal courts.” *Doe v. Blue Cross & Blue Shield United of Wisconsin*, 112 F.3d 869, 872 (7th Cir. 1997). Secondly, the judges assigned to this case are unable to assess potential conflicts of interest without knowing the identities of the parties.

The Court therefore orders that, on or before **May 18, 2006**, plaintiffs’ counsel shall either (1) file a motion under seal seeking leave for plaintiffs to proceed under fictitious names, or (2) file a notice which identifies the plaintiffs’ true names and states that they do not seek leave to proceed under fictitious names.

In the event that plaintiffs elect to seek leave to proceed under fictitious names, plaintiffs' counsel shall, on or before May 18, 2006, direct a letter to the chamber of the undersigned which sets forth the plaintiffs' true names.

In addition, on or before May 18, 2006, Plaintiffs' counsel shall file a reply to defendant's response to the motion for leave to withdraw. In that regard, the Court notes that the Complaint alleges that plaintiff Kayla L. is eighteen years old. If that is correct, she is not a minor.

The Court will defer ruling on any motions, including counsel's motion for leave to withdraw, until it is able to determine whether there are any conflicts of interest.

Lastly, plaintiffs' counsel is directed to instruct plaintiffs to refrain from filing any pro se pleadings unless and until counsel is granted leave to withdraw. Any such pleadings shall be stricken,

IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATE: May 11, 2006.

s/ Clifford J. Proud
CLIFFORD J. PROUD
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE